

GENTILE AND JEW

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IT IS also as an attempt to escape that we must interpret the attitude some Jews assume toward their own bodies.

We know that the only ethnic characteristics of the Jews are physical. The anti-Semite has seized upon this fact and has transformed it into a myth: he pretends to be able to detect his enemy at one glance. The reaction of certain Israelites, therefore, is to deny the body that betrays them. Naturally this negation will vary in intensity as their physical appearance is more or less revealing; in any case, they do not feel toward their bodies that tranquil sentiment of property which characterizes most "Aryans."

For these latter the body is a fruit of the French soil; they possess it by that same profound and magical participation which assures them the enjoyment of their land and their culture. Because they are proud of it, they have attached to it a certain number of values that are strictly irrational but are intended to express the idea of *life* as such. Scheler has accurately called them "vital values"; in effect, they concern neither the elementary needs of the body nor the demands of the spirit, but a certain blossoming, a certain biological style that seems to be a manifestation of the intimate functioning of the organism, the harmony and independence of the organs, the cellular metabolism, and above all the "life plan," that

blind and wily design which is the very essence of life. Grace, nobility, vivacity are among these values. In fact, we ascribe them even to animals: we speak of the grace of a cat, of the nobility of the eagle.

It is obvious that people introduce a great number of these biological values into the concept of *race*. Is not race itself a pure vital value; does it not enclose in its basic structure a judgment of value, since the very idea of race implies that of inequality? Hence the Christian, the Aryan, feels his body in a special way. He does not have a pure and simple consciousness of the massive modifications of his organs; the messages and appeals that his body sends him come with certain coefficients of ideality, and are always more or less symbolic of vital values. He even devotes a portion of his activity to procuring perceptions of himself that correspond to his vital ideal: the nonchalance of the elegant, the vivacity and "stir" which characterize the stylish manner in certain epochs, the ferocious air of the Italian Fascist, the grace of women—all these seek to express the aristocracy of the body. And to these values are naturally linked some anti-values, such as the discredit attaching to the "lower functions" of the body, or certain codes of behavior and sentiments—modesty, for example. The latter, certainly, is not merely a sense of shame at showing one's nakedness; it is also a way of making the body precious, a refusal to see the body as a mere instrument: the body is hidden in its sanctuary like an object of adoration.

The inauthentic Jew is deprived of his vital values by the Christian. If he becomes conscious of his body, the concept of race immediately appears to poison his intimate sensations. The values of nobility and grace have been preempted by the Aryans, who refuse them to him. If he accepted these values he would be constrained perhaps to reconsider the notion of ethnic superiority with all its consequences. In the very name of *universal man*, he refuses to lend an ear

IN THE April and May issues of COMMENTARY, JEAN-PAUL SARTRE wrote on "The Situation of the Jew," and drew a "Portrait of the Inauthentic Jew." In these two articles, M. Sartre probed the problem of how the Jew is "created" by the non-Jewish world and how the "inauthentic" Jew attempts to escape from this situation. In this final article, M. Sartre concludes his discussion of the "inauthentic" Jew and analyzes the problem of anti-Semitism in its general significance. These three articles comprise approximately three-quarters of the book *Réflexions sur la Question Juive*, published in Paris in 1946. The translation is by George J. Becker.

to the private messages his organism sends him; in the name of *rationality* he rejects irrational values and accepts only spiritual values. Universality being for him at the summit of the scale of values, he conceives of a sort of *universal and rationalized body*. He does not have an ascetic's disdain for his body, he does not call it a "rag" or a "beast," but neither does he see it as an object of veneration. Insofar as he does not actually forget it, he treats it as an instrument, which he concerns himself with only in order to adapt it with precision to his ends.

And just as he refuses to consider the irrational values of life, so he refuses to set up a hierarchy among the natural functions. This refusal has two purposes: on the one hand it entails a denial of the ethnic specificity of Israel, and on the other it is an offensive weapon aimed at persuading Christians that their bodies are only instruments. That "lack of shame" with which the anti-Semite reproaches certain Jews has no other origin. It is primarily an effort to treat the body rationally. If the body is a mechanism, why cast an interdict upon its needs for excretion? Why exercise a perpetual control over it? It must be cared for, cleaned, maintained, without joy, without love, and without shame—like a machine.

And sometimes, indeed, there is also a certain despair behind this lack of shame: what is the good of veiling a body that the gaze of the "Aryans" has denuded once and for all? To be a Jew in the eyes of the world—is that not worse than being naked? Of course, this rationalism is not confined to the Jews: there are a good many Christians—doctors, for example—who assume such a rational point of view toward their own bodies, or the bodies of their children. But in such cases it is a matter of a conquest, of an enfranchisement which coexists, usually, with many prelogical survivals. The Jew, on the other hand, is not trying to criticize the vital values; he has become such that he has no feeling of them.

It should be added, however, as a point against the anti-Semite, that this bodily uneasiness that occurs among Jews may have quite opposite results and may lead to shame of the body and an extreme modesty. I have been told of many Jews who go far beyond most Christians in this respect and whose constant concern is to conceal their bodies.

And there are others who are preoccupied with spiritualizing their bodies, that is, clothing them in spiritual signification, since they deny them vital values; to a Christian the faces and gestures of certain Jews are often embarrassing—they express intelligence, goodness, resignation, or pain too clearly and for too long a time.

It is customary to make fun of the rapid and voluble gestures that the Jew makes with his hands when he speaks—though this mimic vivacity is actually less widespread than people think. It is highly important that we distinguish this trait from behavior that resembles it in appearance, such as that of the typical citizen of Marseille, for example. The mimicry of the Marseillais—exaggerated, rapid, unquenchable—goes with his interior fire, his constant nervousness, his desire to render with the whole body what he sees and what he feels. In the Jew there is primarily a desire to be totally meaningful, to feel the organism as a medium in the service of an idea, to transcend the body that weighs him down and go beyond it toward objects or truths susceptible to reason. Let me hasten to add that in such delicate matters we must protect ourselves with all sorts of reservations. What we have just said does not apply to all inauthentic Jews; above all, it varies in importance with the general attitude of the Jew, depending on his education, his origin, and especially the general pattern of his behavior.

It seems to me that one might explain in the same way the famous Jewish "lack of tact." (Of course, there is a considerable amount of malice in this accusation.) In the last analysis what we call tact is connected with "subtlety of spirit," a thing the Jew does not trust. To act with tact is to appreciate a situation at a glance, to embrace it as a whole, to feel it rather than to analyze it, but it is at the same time to direct one's conduct by reference to a multitude of indistinct principles, of which some concern vital values and others express ceremonies and traditions of politeness that are altogether irrational. Thus to act "with tact" implies that the doer of the act has adopted a certain conception of the world, one that is traditional, ritual, and synthetic; one for which *he can give no reason*. It implies also a particular sense of psychological en-

semples, it is in no sense *critical*, and we might add that it takes on its whole meaning only in a strictly defined community with common ideas, mores, and customs. The Jew has as much natural tact as anybody, if by that is understood a basic comprehension of others, but he doesn't *seek* to have it.

To agree to base his conduct on tact would be to recognize that reason is not a sufficient guide in human relations and that traditional and obscure powers of intuition may be superior to it when it is a question of adapting oneself to other people or of handling them. That would mean to admit a kind of casuistry, a morality of particular cases, and thus to renounce the idea of a universal human nature that demands universal treatment; it would be an admission that concrete situations, as well as concrete men, cannot be compared; it would mean a relapse into particularism. And by that the Jew would assist his own downfall, for in the name of this tact the anti-Semite denounces him as a particular case and excludes him from the national community.

The Jew has a marked inclination to believe that the worst difficulties may be resolved by reason; he does not *see* the irrational, the magical, the concrete and particular nuance; he *does not believe* in singularities of sentiment. By a very understandable defense reaction, this man who lives by the opinion that others have of him tries to deny the values of opinion. He is tempted to apply to men the reasoning which is suited to objects; he moves toward the analytic rationalism of the engineer and the worker: not because he is formed or attracted by objects but because he is rejected by men. And the analytical psychology he constructs permits him readily to reduce the synthetic structures of consciousness to a play of interests, to the composition of appetites, to the algebraic sum of tendencies. The art of dominating, of reducing, or of persuading becomes a rational calculation. Only, this explanation of human conduct by universal notions entails the risk of abstraction.

INDEED, it is the taste for abstraction that explains the Jew's special relationship to money. Jews love money, we are told. Yet this collective consciousness that is eager to paint the Jew as avid for gain rarely confuses him with that other popular

myth of the miser: the munificent prodigality of the Jew is even a favorite theme of the anti-Semite's accusations. Certainly, if the Jew loves money, it is not because he has any particular appetite for copper or gold or bank notes: for him money often assumes the abstract form of shares of stock, checks, bank deposits.

Actually it is the power of purchase that appeals to him, and if he prefers this form of property to all others it is because it is universal. Appropriation by purchase does not depend on the race of the buyer; it does not vary with his idiosyncrasies. The *price* of the object is set in reference to *any* buyer, who is set apart only by the fact that he has the amount written on the ticket. And when that sum is paid, the buyer is legally proprietor of the object. Thus property by purchase is an abstract and universal form of proprietorship, in contrast to the singular and irrational ownership by participation.

Here there is a vicious circle: The richer a Jew is, the greater the tendency of the traditionalist anti-Semite to insist that true property is not legal property but an adaptation of body and spirit to the object possessed. In this way, as we have seen, the poor man recovers the soil and the spiritual goods of France. Anti-Semitic literature abounds in proud replies addressed to Jews by virtuous orphans and ruined old nobles, the substance of which is that honor, love, virtue, taste, etc., are "not to be bought." But the more the anti-Semite insists on this sort of possession—which aims to exclude the Jew from the community—the more the Jew will be tempted to affirm that the sole form of property is legal property gained through purchase. In opposition to that magical possession that is refused him and which deprives him even of the objects he has bought, he becomes attached to money as the legitimate power of appropriation by the universal and anonymous man he seeks to be. If he insists on the power of money, it is to defend his rights as a consumer in a community that contests them, and it is at the same time to rationalize the bond of possessor to object possessed in order to bring property into the framework of a rational conception of the universe. In effect, purchase, as a rational commercial act, legitimizes property, which becomes in these terms simply a right of use. At the same

time, the *value* of the object, instead of appearing as some mystical quality accessible only to the initiate, becomes identified with its price, which can be known by everybody.

Thus we see all the background for the Jew's alleged taste for money. If money defines value, then value is universal and rational; it does not emanate from obscure social sources, it is accessible to all. The Jew cannot then be excluded from society: he becomes a part of it as anonymous purchaser and as consumer. Money is a factor of integration. To the fine formulas of the anti-Semite—"Money can't do everything"—"There are things money can't buy"—the Jew replies sometimes by affirming the absolute power of money: "Anybody can be bought, if you can just find his price." This is not cynicism or baseness; it is merely a counter-attack. The Jew would like to persuade the anti-Semite that irrational values are a pure appearance and that there is no one who is not ready to turn them in for cash. And if the anti-Semite lets himself make a purchase, there is the proof—proof that at heart he also prefers legal appropriation by purchase to mystical appropriation by participation: at one stroke he becomes anonymous; he is no more than a universal man who is defined solely by his power to buy. Thus are explained at one and the same time the Jew's "eagerness for gain" and his very real generosity. His "love of money" merely indicates his deliberate decision to consider valid only the rational, universal, and abstract ties that men have with things; the Jew is a utilitarian because opinion refuses him all enjoyment of things except *use*. At the same time he wishes to acquire through money the social rights that are refused him as an individual. He is not shocked at being loved for his money; the respect and adulation riches procure for him go to the anonymous being who possesses such a power of purchase. It is precisely this anonymity he seeks, for, paradoxically, he wishes to be rich in order to escape notice.

THESE comments should permit us to see the principal traits of Jewish sensibility. It is, one suspects, deeply marked by the choice the Jew makes of himself and how he understands his situation. But we do not intend to draw a portrait here. We shall only recall the long patience of the Jew and

his expectation of persecution, that pre-sentiment of catastrophe which he seeks to hide from himself during happy years but which bursts out suddenly in prophetic vision as soon as the skies darken. We shall emphasize the particular form of his humanism, that will to universal brotherhood which collides with the most obstinate of particularisms, and the bizarre mixture of love, hate, admiration, and distrust that he feels toward those who wish nothing to do with him.

Do not believe that if you go up to him with your arms outspread, he will give you his confidence. He has learned to detect anti-Semitism under the most noisy protestations of liberalism. He is as distrustful of Christians as workers are of those young members of the middle class who have "a love for the people." His utilitarian psychology leads him to look for self-interest, calculation, and the pretense of tolerance behind the manifestations of sympathy that some people lavish on him. And he is rarely mistaken. Yet he seeks eagerly for these very manifestations; he loves the honors that he mistrusts; he wants to be on the other side of the social barrier—with the others, among the others; he caresses the impossible dream of being suddenly rescued from universal suspicion by real affection, by evident proofs of good will.

We must understand this world of extremes, this humanity cut in two; we must see that every Jewish sentiment has a different quality depending on whether it is addressed to a Christian or a Jew. The love of a Jew for a Jewess is not of the same nature as the love he may feel for an "Aryan" woman. There is a basic doubling of Jewish sensibility concealed beneath the exterior of a universal humanism.

Finally, we should note the disarming freshness and the uncultivated spontaneity of Jewish feelings. Completely given over to rationalizing the world, the inauthentic Israelite can no doubt analyze his affections, but he cannot cultivate them: it is possible for him to be Proust, but not Barrès. This is because the culture of sensibility and of the self presupposes a profound traditionalism, a taste for the particular and the irrational, a recourse to empirical methods, the tranquil enjoyment of deserved privileges: all these the principles of an aristocratic sensibility. A Christian will derive

from this the tendency to treat himself like a luxurious plant, or like those barrels of good wine that are sent to the Indies only to be brought back at once to France, so that the sea air may penetrate them and give the wine an unparalleled savor. The culture of the ego is entirely magical and participationist, yet the continual turning of attention toward oneself does in the end bear some fruit. The Jew who is fleeing from himself and who conceives of psychological processes as mechanical functionings rather than as the flowering of an organism, does no doubt observe the play of his inclinations, for he has placed himself on a reflective level, but he does not cultivate them; he is not even sure that he gets their real meaning: introspective analysis is not the best instrument for psychological inquiry. Thus the rationalist is constantly overwhelmed by a fresh and powerful mass of passions and emotions. He joins crude sensibility to the refinements of intellectual culture. There is a sincerity, a youth, a warmth in the manifestations of friendship of a Jew that one will rarely find in a Christian, hardened as the latter is by tradition and ceremony. This is also what gives a disarming character to Jewish suffering, the most overwhelming of sufferings.

But it is not necessary to labor this point. It is enough to have indicated the consequences Jewish inauthenticity may have.

WE SHALL content ourselves in conclusion with indicating in broad strokes what is called Jewish uneasiness. For Jews are often uneasy. An Israelite is never sure of his position or of his possessions. He cannot even say that tomorrow he will still be in the country he inhabits today, for his situation, his power, and even his right to live may be placed in jeopardy from one moment to the next. Besides, as we have seen, he is haunted by that impalpable and humiliating image which the hostile mob has of him. His history is one of wandering over the course of twenty centuries; at any moment he must be ready to pick up his stick and his bundle. Ill at ease even inside his own skin, the unreconciled enemy of his own body, following the impossible dream of an assimilation that constantly recedes, he can never have the security of the "Aryan," firmly established on his land and so certain

of his property that he can even forget that he is a proprietor and see the bond that unites him to his country as *natural*.

However, it should not be thought that Jewish uneasiness is metaphysical. It would be an error to identify it with the anxiety that moves us to a consideration of the condition of man. I should say rather that metaphysical uneasiness is a condition that the Jew—no more than the worker—cannot allow himself today. One must be sure of one's rights and firmly rooted in the world, one must be free of the fears that each day assail oppressed minorities or classes, before one dare raise questions about the place of man in the world and his ultimate destiny. In a word, metaphysics is the special privilege of the "Aryan" governing classes. Let no one see in this an attempt to discredit metaphysics; when men are liberated, it will become again an essential concern of mankind.

The disquietude of the Jew is not metaphysical; it is social. The ordinary object of his concern is not yet the place of man in the universe, but his place in society. He cannot perceive the loneliness of each man in the midst of a silent universe, because he has not yet emerged from society into the world. It is among men that he feels himself lonely; the racial problem limits his horizon. Nor is his uneasiness of the kind that seeks perpetuation; he takes no pleasure in it—he seeks reassurance.

It has been called to my attention that there have been no Jewish surrealists in France. That is because surrealism, in its own way, raises the question of human destiny. Its destructive activities and the great fanfare raised over them were the luxurious games of young members of the middle class completely at ease in a victorious country that belonged to them. The Jew does not dream of destroying, or of considering the condition of man in its nudity. He is the social man *par excellence*, because his torment is social.

It is society, not the decree of God, that has made him a Jew and brought the Jewish problem into being. As he is forced to make his choices entirely within the perspective set by this problem, it is in and through the social that he chooses even his own existence. His constructive effort to integrate himself in the national community is social; social is the effort he makes to think of him-

self, that is, to situate himself, among other men; his joys and sorrows are social; but all this is because the curse that rests upon him is social. If in consequence he is reproached for his metaphysical inauthenticity, if attention is called to the fact that his constant uneasiness is accompanied by a radical positivism, let us not forget that these reproaches return upon those who make them: the Jew is social because the anti-Semite has made him so.

SUCH, then, is this haunted man, condemned to make his choice of himself on the basis of false problems and in a false situation, deprived of the metaphysical sense by the hostility of the society that surrounds him, driven to a rationalism of despair. His life is nothing but a long flight from others and from himself. He has been alienated even from his own body; his emotional life has been cut in two; he has been reduced to pursuing the impossible dream of universal brotherhood in a world that rejects him.

Whose is the fault? It is our eyes that reflect to him the unacceptable image that he wishes to dissimulate. It is our words and our gestures—all our words and all our gestures—our anti-Semitism, but equally our condescending liberalism—that have poisoned him. It is we who constrain him to choose to be a Jew whether through flight from himself or through self-assertion; it is we who force him into the dilemma of Jewish authenticity or inauthenticity. We have created this variety of men who have no meaning except as artificial products of a capitalist (or feudal) society, whose only reason for existing is to serve as a scapegoat for a still prelogical community—this species that bears witness for essential humanity better than any other because it was born of secondary reactions within the body of humanity—this quintessence of man, disgraced, uprooted, destined from the start to either inauthenticity or martyrdom. In this situation there is not one of us who is not totally guilty and even criminal; the Jewish blood that the Nazis shed falls on all our heads.

The fact remains, you may answer, that the Jew is free: he can choose to be authentic. That is true, but we must understand first of all that *that does not concern us*. The prisoner is always free to try to run

away, if it is clearly understood that he risks death. Is his jailer any less guilty?

Jewish authenticity consists in choosing oneself *as Jew*—that is, in realizing one's Jewish condition. The authentic Jew abandons the myth of the universal man; he knows himself and wills himself into history as a historic and damned creature; he ceases to run away from himself and to be ashamed of his own kind. He understands that society is bad; for the naive monism of the inauthentic Jew he substitutes a social pluralism. He knows that he is one who stands apart, untouchable, scorned, proscribed—and it is *as such* that he asserts his being. At once he gives up his rationalistic optimism; he sees that the world is fragmented by irrational divisions, and in accepting this fragmentation—at least in what concerns him—in proclaiming himself a Jew, he makes some of these values and these divisions his. He chooses his brothers and his peers; they are the other Jews. He stakes everything on human grandeur, for he accepts the obligation to live in a situation defined by the fact that it is unlivable; he derives his pride from his humiliation.

The moment he ceases to be passive, he takes away all power and all virulence from anti-Semitism. The inauthentic Jew flees Jewish reality, and the anti-Semite makes him a Jew in spite of himself; but the authentic Jew *makes himself a Jew*, in the face of all and against all. He accepts all, even martyrdom, and the anti-Semite, deprived of his weapons, must be content to yelp at the Jew as he goes by, and can no longer touch him. At one stroke the Jew, like any authentic man, escapes description. The common characteristics we have attributed to the inauthentic Jews emanate from their common inauthenticity. We shall encounter none of them in the authentic Jew; he is what he makes himself, that is all that can be said. In this isolation to which he has consented, he becomes again a man, a whole man, with the metaphysical horizons that go with the condition of man.

But this does not mean that we can soothe our consciences by saying: "Very well, since the Jew is free, let him be authentic, and we shall have peace." The choice of authenticity is not a solution of the social aspect of the Jewish problem; it is not even an individual solution. No

doubt authentic Jews are today much more numerous than one may suspect. The suffering that the Jews have undergone during the past few years has done much to open their eyes, and it seems to me even probable that there are more authentic Jews than authentic Christians. Yet the choice they have made of themselves does not smooth their way as individuals, rather the contrary.

Take the example of one "authentic" French Jew who, after fighting in 1940, directed a French propaganda review in London during the occupation. He wrote under a pseudonym, because he wished to avoid trouble for his "Aryan" wife, who had remained in France. This is what many French émigrés did, and when they did it, it was all right. But since he was a Jew, he was refused this right: "Aha," people said, "another Yid trying to hide his origin." Again, he chose the articles he published with strict reference to their merit. If by chance the proportion of Jewish articles was considerable, the readers sneered; they wrote to him: "I see that the happy family is getting together again." On the other hand, if he refused a Jewish article, he was accused of acting like an anti-Semite. "Oh well," you may say, "let him ignore all that, since he is authentic." That is easily said, but he cannot ignore it, precisely because he is engaged in carrying on propaganda and must therefore depend on opinion. "Very well, then; it simply means that this sort of activity is closed to Jews: they'll have to give it up." There we are: you would accept authenticity if it led straight to the ghetto. And it is you who refuse to see it as a solution to the problem.

SOcially, moreover, things are no better. The circumstances we have created are such that in the end division is created among the Jews. The choice of authenticity can, in fact, lead to conflicting political decisions. The Jew can choose to be authentic by asserting his place as Jew in the French community, with all that goes with it of rights and martyrdom; he may feel that for him the best way to be French is to declare himself a *French Jew*. But he may also be led by his choice of authenticity to seek the creation of a Jewish nation possessing its own soil and autonomy; he may persuade himself that Jewish authen-

ticity demands that the Jew be sustained by a Jewish national community.

It is not impossible that these opposing choices might be reconciled and made complementary as two aspects of Jewish reality. But for that it would be necessary that Jewish behavior should not be constantly spied upon and should not involve the constant risk of furnishing weapons for the Jew's enemies to use against him. If we had not created for the Jew his *situation* as a Jew, it would be possible for him to exercise an option between Jerusalem and France; the immense majority of French Jews would choose to remain in France, a small number would go to increase the Jewish nation in Palestine. That would not mean that the Jew who was integrated in the French national community would preserve ties with Tel-Aviv; at most, Palestine might represent in his eyes a sort of ideal value, a symbol, and certainly the existence of an autonomous Jewish community would be infinitely less dangerous to the integrity of French society than, for example, the existence of an ultramontane clergy, which we tolerate with perfect equanimity.

But the temper of our time turns so legitimate a choice into a source of conflict among our Jews. In the eyes of the anti-Semite, the establishment of a Jewish nation furnishes only another proof that the Jew is out of place in the French community. Once, he was reproached for his race; now he is regarded as coming from a foreign country: he doesn't belong here, let him go to Jerusalem. Thus authenticity, when it leads to Zionism, is harmful to the Jews who wish to remain in their original fatherland, since it gives new arguments to the anti-Semite. The French Jew becomes angered at the Zionist, who complicates further an already delicate situation, and the Zionist is angered at the French Jew, whom he accuses *a priori* of inauthenticity.

Thus the choice of authenticity appears to be a *moral* decision, bringing certainty to the Jew on the ethical level but in no way serving as a solution on the social or political level: his situation is such that everything he does turns against him.

THE preceding remarks of course make no pretense at providing a solution to the Jewish problem. But perhaps they do give

us a basis for stating the conditions on which a solution might be envisaged.

In effect, we have just seen that, contrary to a widespread opinion, it is not the Jewish character that provokes anti-Semitism but, rather, that it is the anti-Semite who creates the Jew. The primary phenomenon, therefore, is anti-Semitism, a regressive social force and a conception deriving from the prelogical world. With the problem thus stated, what are we to do about it? Clearly, the solution of the problem involves a definition both of the goal to be attained and of the means for its attainment. All too often people discuss means when they are still uncertain of their goal.

In short, what can we seek? Assimilation? That is a dream; the true opponent of assimilation is not the Jew but the anti-Semite, as we have already demonstrated. Since his emancipation—that is, for about a century and a half—the Jew has tried to gain acceptance in a society that rejects him. It is pointless to ask him to hasten this integration, which always recedes before him; so long as there is anti-Semitism, assimilation cannot be realized.

It is true that some people advocate the employment of drastic means. There are even Jews who suggest that all Jews be forced to change their names. But this measure would be inadequate; it would be necessary to supplement it with a policy of mixed marriages and a rigorous interdiction against Jewish religious practices—in particular, circumcision. I say quite simply: these measures would be inhumane. Possibly Napoleon might have thought of such measures, but what Napoleon sought was precisely the sacrifice of the person to the community. No democracy can seek the integration of the Jews at such a cost.

Moreover, such a procedure could be advocated only by inauthentic Jews who are a prey to a crisis of anti-Semitism; it aims at nothing less than the liquidation of the Jewish race. It represents an extreme form of the tendency we have noticed in the democrat, a tendency purely and simply to suppress the Jew for the sake of *the man*. But *the man* does not exist; there are Jews, Protestants, Catholics; there are Frenchmen, Englishmen, Germans; there are whites, blacks, yellows. In short, these drastic measures of coercion would mean the annihila-

tion of a spiritual community, founded on custom and affection, to the advantage of the national community. Most conscious Jews would refuse assimilation if it were presented to them under this aspect. Certainly they wish to integrate themselves in the nation, but *as Jews*, and who would dare to reproach them for that? We have forced them to think of themselves as Jews, we have made them conscious of their solidarity with other Jews. Should we be astonished that they now reject a policy that would destroy Israel?

It is idle to object that they form a nation within a nation. We have attempted to show that the Jewish community is neither national nor international, neither religious, nor ethnic, nor political: it is a *quasi-historical* community. What makes the Jew is his concrete situation; what unites him to other Jews is the identity of their situations. This quasi-historical body should not be considered a foreign element in society. On the contrary, it is necessary to it. If the Church tolerated its existence at a time when the Church was all-powerful, it was because it took on certain economic functions that made it indispensable. Today those functions are open to all, but that does not mean that the Jew, as a spiritual factor, makes no contribution to the peculiar nature and equilibrium of the French nation. We have described objectively, perhaps severely, the traits of the inauthentic Jew. There is not one of them that is opposed to his assimilation *as such* in the national society. On the contrary, his rationalism, his critical spirit, his dream of a contractual society and of universal brotherhood, his humanism—all these qualities make him an indispensable leaven in that society.

WHAT we propose here is a concrete liberalism. By that we mean that all persons who through their work collaborate toward the greatness of a country have the full rights of citizens of that country. What gives them this right is not the possession of a problematical and abstract "human nature," but their active participation in the life of the society. This means, then, that the Jews—and likewise the Arabs and the Negroes—from the moment that they are participants in the national enterprise, have a right in that enterprise; they are citizens. But they have

these rights as Jews, Negroes, or Arabs—that is, as concrete persons.

In societies where women vote, they are not asked to change their sex when they enter the voting booth; the vote of a woman is worth just as much as that of a man, but it is as a woman that she votes, with her womanly intuitions and concerns, in her full character of a woman. When it is a question of the legal rights of the Jew, and of the more obscure but equally indispensable rights that are not inscribed in any code, he must enjoy those rights not as a potential Christian but precisely as a French Jew. It is with his character, his customs, his tastes, his religion if he has one, his name, and his physical traits that we *must* accept him. And if that acceptance is total and sincere, the result will be, first, to make easier the Jew's choice of authenticity, and then, bit by bit, to make possible, without violence and by the very course of history, that assimilation to which some would drive him by force.

But the concrete liberalism we have just described is a goal; it is in danger of becoming no more than a mere ideal if we do not determine upon the means to attain it. As we have shown, it cannot be a matter of acting on the Jew. The Jewish problem is born of anti-Semitism; thus it is anti-Semitism that we must suppress in order to resolve the problem. The question therefore comes back to this: What shall we do about anti-Semitism?

Ordinary procedures, particularly propaganda and education, are by no means without importance. It is to be hoped that the child in school will receive an education that will permit him to avoid errors of passion; but the results of such education may have only an individual reference. Likewise, we should not be afraid to prohibit by basic law statements and acts that tend to bring discredit upon any category of Frenchmen. But let us have no illusions about the effectiveness of these measures: laws have never embarrassed and will never embarrass the anti-Semite, who conceives of himself as belonging to a mystical society outside the bounds of legality. We may heap up decrees and interdictions, but they will always come from the legal France, and the anti-Semite pretends that he represents the real France.

Let us recall that anti-Semitism is a conception of the Manichean and primitive

world in which hatred for the Jew arises as a great explanatory myth. We have seen that it is not a matter of an isolated opinion, but of the total choice that a man in a situation makes of himself and of the meaning of the universe. It is the expression of a certain ferocious and mystical sense of real property. If we wish to make such a choice impossible, it will not be enough to address ourselves by propaganda, education, and legal interdictions against the liberty of the anti-Semite. Since he, like all men, exists as a free agent within a situation, it is his situation that must be modified from top to bottom. In short, if we can change the perspective of choice, then the choice itself will change. Thus we do not attack freedom, but bring it about that freedom decides on other bases, and in terms of other structures.

Political action can never be directed against the freedom of citizens; its very nature forbids it to be concerned with freedom except in a negative fashion, that is, in taking care not to infringe upon it. It acts only on situations. We have demonstrated that anti-Semitism is a passionate effort to realize a national union *against* the division of society into classes. It is an attempt to suppress the fragmentation of the community into groups hostile to one another by carrying common passions to such a temperature that they cause barriers to dissolve. Yet divisions continue to exist, since their economic and social causes have not been touched; an attempt is made to lump them all together into a single one—distinctions between rich and poor, between laboring and owning classes, between legal powers and occult powers, between city-dwellers and country-dwellers, etc., etc.—they are all summed up in the distinction between Jew and non-Jew. This means that anti-Semitism is a mythical, bourgeois representation of the class struggle, and that it could not exist in a classless society. Anti-Semitism manifests the *separation* of men and their isolation in the midst of the community, the conflict of interests and the cross-currents of passions: it can exist only in a society where a rather loose solidarity unites strongly structured pluralities; it is a phenomenon of social pluralism. In a society whose members feel mutual bonds of solidarity, because all are engaged in the same enterprise, it would have no place.

Finally, anti-Semitism indicates a certain

mystical and participationist liaison of man with his "goods" which results from the present system of property. Again, anti-Semitism would have no existence in a society without classes and founded on collective ownership of the instruments of labor, one in which man, freed of his hallucinations inherited from an older world, would at long last throw himself wholeheartedly into *his* enterprise—to create the kingdom of man. Anti-Semitism would then be cut at its roots.

Thus the authentic Jew who thinks of himself as a Jew because the anti-Semite has put him in the situation of a Jew is not opposed to assimilation any more than the class-conscious worker is opposed to the liquidation of classes. On the contrary, it is an access of consciousness that will hasten the suppression of both the class struggle and racism. The authentic Jew simply renounces *for himself* an assimilation that is today impossible; he awaits the radical liquidation of anti-Semitism for his sons. The Jew of today is in full war. What is there to say except that the socialist revolution is necessary to and sufficient for the suppression of the anti-Semite? It is for the Jews *also* that we shall make the revolution.

AND while we wait for it? After all, it is lazy to place on a future revolution the burden of liquidating the Jewish question.

Anti-Semitism is a problem that affects us all directly; we are all bound to the Jew, because anti-Semitism leads straight to National Socialism. And if we do not respect the person of the Israelite, who will respect us? If we are conscious of these dangers, if we have lived in shame because of our involuntary complicity with the anti-Semites, who have made hangmen of us all, perhaps we can understand that we must fight for the Jew, no more or less than for ourselves.

I am told that a Jewish league against anti-Semitism has just been reconstituted. I am delighted; that proves that the sense of authenticity is developing among the Jews. But can such a league be really effective? Many Jews, and some of the best among them, hesitate to participate because of a sort of modesty: "That's biting off too much," one of them said to me recently. And he added, rather clumsily but with undoubted sincerity: "Anti-Semitism and persecution are not important."

It is easy enough to understand this repugnance. But *we* who are not Jews, should we share it? Richard Wright, the Negro writer, said recently: "There is no Negro problem in the United States, there is only a White problem." In the same way, we must say that anti-Semitism is not a Jewish problem; it is *our* problem. Since we are not guilty and yet run the risk of being its victims—yes, we too—we must be very blind indeed not to see that it is our concern in the highest degree. It is not up to the Jews first of all to form a militant league against anti-Semitism; it is up to us.

It is evident that such a league will not end the problem. Yet if it spread out all over France, if it succeeded in getting official recognition from the state, if its existence brought into being in other countries similar leagues with which it could unite to form ultimately an international association, if it intervened successfully wherever injustices were called to its attention, if it acted through the press, through propaganda and education, it would attain a triple result: First, it would permit the adversaries of anti-Semitism to know their strength and to unite in an active group; second, it would rally many hesitating people, people who have no convictions on the Jewish question, for an organized group always exercises a considerable force of attraction; finally, to an adversary who is always ready to contrast the real country with the legal country, it would offer the sight of a concrete community engaged in a particular fight having nothing to do with universalist abstractions of legality. This would take away from the anti-Semite his favorite argument, which rests on the myth of the concrete. The cause of the Jews would be half won if only their friends brought to their defense a little of the passion and the perseverance their enemies use to bring them down.

In order to awaken this passion, what is needed is not to appeal to the generosity of the "Aryans"—with even the best of them that virtue is in eclipse. What must be done is to point out to each one that the fate of the Jews is *his* fate. Not one Frenchman will be free so long as the Jews do not enjoy the fullness of their rights. Not one Frenchman will be secure so long as a single Jew—in France or *in the world at large*—can fear for his life.